

Local Citizens and Local Law Enforcement Fighting Crime Together
Rep. Lloyd Doggett

This Tuesday, August 7th will mark the 24th Annual National Night Out. Texas residents will reaffirm their commitment to fighting crime in their neighborhoods by spending the evening outside at block parties and visiting with neighbors and local law enforcement personnel. National Night Out is a continuing tradition in communities that love their neighborhoods and wants to keep them safe.

National Night Out sends a clear message to criminals - Stay Out! These are our streets and our neighborhoods. When neighborhoods, schools, businesses, civic organizations, and community volunteers partner with law enforcement - it sends a much stronger message to criminals than any one of us could do by ourselves.

Community cooperation with local law enforcement is the key to reducing crime and violence in our neighborhoods. I have heard that message from neighbors and friends. I have also experienced its power first hand. A few years ago, my mother's house was burglarized. Luckily, I was in town and able to get to her house quickly. I was not surprised to see that the local police responded immediately. A neighbor also spotted the burglar and reported the information to the police. Though my mother did not lose valuable property, she felt the invasion of her home. However, we were both relieved by the responsiveness of neighbors and authorities.

That experience emphasized for me the importance of National Night Out and the role it plays to help combat crime in our community by creating a powerful network among neighbors that empowers individual households to fight crime block by block. Back in Washington, I continue to work on your behalf to make sure that your collaborative local efforts are being backed by solid anti-crime legislation. Recently, the House of Representatives approved \$725 million for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) - the successful program that has put more than 100,000 law enforcement officers on our streets. This funding restores cuts that had all but eliminated the COPS program, and will instead put thousands of new cops on the beat. The House also passed increased funding for DNA analysis, forensic crime labs, and heightened enforcement against methamphetamine trafficking.

National Night Out is about power - the power to control our personal safety and the power to control the quality of life in our community. When we join together to ensure the safety of our streets and neighborhoods, the threat of criminals is lessened. As communities, we should harness that positive power not just on National Night Out, but every night.

